

## Fulbright Accuses Thieu of Persecuting a Deputy

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5—Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said today that President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam was persecuting an opposition leader for exposing the President's "political bag man" with the National Assembly.

Senator Fulbright also said that the United States mission in Saigon had "shrugged its shoulders" over the case, despite instructions from Washington to intervene on behalf of Tran Ngoc Chau, the opposition leader who has been threatened with death by President Thieu.

The affair was described by the Senator as an "ominous development."

"Perhaps the story of Tran Ngoc Chau will prove to be the last chapter in the history of representative government in Vietnam," the Senator said in a three-page statement.

Senator Fulbright raised the issue as the committee concluded the opening round of hearings on various resolutions supporting and criticizing United States policy in Vietnam. The Vietnamization program was criticized in the hearings as supporting a corrupt regime in Saigon, and Senator Fulbright was evidently attempting to document this point with introduction of the Chau case.

"Perhaps the story of Tran Ngoc Chau will prove to be the last chapter in the history of representative government in Vietnam," the Senator said in a three-page statement, which he issued after having summarized the contents at today's committee session.

The committee concluded the opening round of its hearings in Vietnam in which the Nixon administration's program of Vietnamization had been criticized as constituting support for a corrupt regime in Saigon. Mr. Fulbright was evidently at-

tempting to document this by introducing the Chau case.

Mr. Chau has been accused by President Thieu of having Communist connections. Senator Fulbright suggested that the real reason for President Thieu's attack was Mr. Chau's growing power as an opposition leader and as a critic of what Senator Fulbright said was President Thieu's attempt to corrupt the National Assembly.

President Thieu accused Mr. Chau of failing to report that, starting in 1965, he was in contact with his brother, Tran Ngoc Hien, a North Vietnamese intelligence agent.

Senator Fulbright said, "I know for a fact, from private sources, that he did report his contacts with his brother to a number of United States officials in Vietnam, including C.I.A. officers with whom he had daily contact."

Mr. Chau was designated by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1966 to be head of the training program at the Vungtau pacification center. According to Congressional sources, the C.I.A. at one point sought to have Mr. Chau enlist his brother as an agent.

### Thieu's Aide a Target

After his election to the National Assembly in 1967, Mr. Chau became head of the Opposition bloc. Starting last year, he began to advocate a cease-fire and direct negotiations with the Vietcong.

According to Mr. Fulbright's account, Mr. Chau also began to attack Nguyen Cao Thang, a Saigon pharmacist and a member of President Thieu's inner circle. Mr. Thang was described today by Joseph Kraft, syndicated columnist, as President Thieu's "political bag man," a description used approvingly by Senator Fulbright.

Mr. Chau's brother was arrested in April and interrogated in July. It was not until November, however, that President Thieu began to attack Mr. Chau, a personal friend with whom he had once shared

quarters when they were both junior army officers.

"It appears," Senator Fulbright said, "that Thieu's open attacks on Chau began only after Chau had denounced the pharmacist Thang."

President Thieu succeeded yesterday in obtaining the 102 signatures needed on a petition lifting Mr. Chau's parliamentary immunity, thus exposing him to prosecution.

In his column today, Mr. Kraft said Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker had been directed to intervene with President Thieu on Mr. Chau's behalf but "the embassy has not bestirred itself."

# Fulbright to Focus Hearings On Case of Saigon Fugitive

By United Press International

Chairman J. William Fulbright says the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will turn its investigation to the political aspects of the Vietnam war, including the case of a former Vietnamese CIA contact.

Fulbright said the CIA contact, Tran Ngoc Chau, was deserted by the U.S. government after he became an opponent of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu and had to go into hiding to escape being jailed.

Chau headed the opposition bloc in the South Vietnamese national assembly and was elected its secretary-general. Fulbright said Chau had "daily contact" with the CIA and, at one point, headed a CIA-operated training center for development of a revolutionary cadre.

Chau is now on the lam, charged by Thieu with failing to tell Saigon officials about his contacts with an enemy agent. Fulbright said Chau, all the time, was reporting his activities fully to U.S. officials, including the CIA, and the real reason Thieu wants him in jail is to remove a powerful opponent.

The chairman disclosed hitherto unreported details of Chau's case yesterday as he announced a new set of hearings on Vietnam beginning Feb. 16. These, he said, will concentrate on U.S. involvement in political programs in South Vietnam—an activity that occupies thousands of U.S. civilian and military advisers.

The chairman said he particularly wants details on a South Vietnamese program called Operation Phoenix involving an estimated 450 American advisers. The program is designed to rout out Viet Cong and sympathizers by killing them, capturing them or converting them to the government side. Fulbright said it amounted to a "program of assassination of leaders."

Fulbright released a three-page statement on the Chau affair, warning that it might "prove to be the last chapter in the history of representative government in Vietnam."

He said Chau began to emerge as an opponent of Thieu last year, advocating a cease-fire and direct negotiations with the Viet Cong. He also made speeches attacking a rich Saigon pharmacist, Nguyen Cao Thang, who has been associated with Thieu, Fulbright said.

Thieu fought back by charging that Chau secretly had contact with a North Vietnamese agent, his brother Tran Ngoc Hien, in 1965 and failed to tell the government about it. But Chau, as a deputy in the assembly, was immune from prosecution, unless three-fourths of the assembly revoked the immunity.

Fulbright said Thieu circulated a petition in the assembly calling for the lifting of Chau's legislative immunity—and the required 102 members have now signed it, having been persuaded through "threats and bribery." At one point, he said, Thieu had warned that the army "will cut off the heads" of Chau and two other deputies unless the assembly acted.

Fulbright said embassy officials in Saigon had "shrugged their shoulders" at Chau's plight despite his prior services and he was now "in hiding," embittered and disenchanted with the United States.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.  
BULLETIN

E - 654,741  
S - 697,004

FEB 6 1970

## U. S. Deserted CIA Contact In Vietnam, Fulbright Says

Washington — (UPI) — Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark), said yesterday the Senate will begin an investigation of the political aspects of the Vietnam war, including the case of a former Vietnamese CIA contact.

Fulbright said the CIA contact, Tran Ngoc Chau, was deserted by the U. S. Government after he became an opponent to South Vietnamese president Nguyen Van Thieu and had to go into hiding to escape being jailed.

Chau headed the opposition bloc in the South Vietnamese National Assembly and was elected its secretary-general. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Chau had "daily contact" with the CIA and, at one point even headed a CIA-operated training center for development of a revolutionary cadre.

### Charged by Thieu

Chau has been charged by President Thieu with failing to tell Saigon officials about his contacts with an enemy agent. Fulbright said Chau reported his activities fully to U. S. officials, including the CIA, and the real reason Thieu wants him in jail is to remove a powerful opponent.

The chairman disclosed the unreported details of Chau's case as he announced yesterday a new set of hearings on Vietnam beginning Feb. 16 which will concentrate on U. S. involvement in political programs in South Vietnam.

Fulbright said he particularly wanted details on a South Vietnamese program, called Phoenix, involving an estimated 450 American advisers. The program is designed to eliminate the Viet Cong and its sympathizers by killing them, capturing them or converting them to the government side. Fulbright said it amounted to a program of assassination of leaders.

### Advocated Cease-Fire

He said Chau began to emerge as an opponent of Thieu last year, advocating a cease-fire and direct negotiations with the Viet Cong. He also made speeches attacking a rich Saigon pharmacist, Nguyen Cao Thang, who has been associated

with Thieu, Fulbright said.

Thieu fought back by charging that Chau in 1965, secretly had contact with a North Vietnamese agent, his brother Tran Ngoc Hien, and failed to tell the government about it. But Chau, as a deputy in the Assembly, was immune from prosecution, unless three-fourths of the assembly revoked the immunity. Fulbright said Chau told the CIA about the secret contact.

Fulbright said Thieu circulated a petition in the Assembly calling for the lifting of Chau's legislative immunity and the required 102 members have now signed it, being persuaded through "threats and bribery."

At one point, Fulbright said, Thieu had warned that the army "will cut off the heads" of Chau and two other deputies unless the Assembly acted.

Fulbright said Chau was now "in hiding," embittered and disenchanted with U. S. officials, because they have not come to his aid.

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may encounter dangerous obstruction from a Legislative Branch suddenly burdened with the urgent business untended during a period of conflict. And I believe that post-war readjustment—so imperative for the avoidance of future wars and for the establishment of a lasting peace—may be impossible to accomplish smoothly unless it is undertaken now. It is in this spirit that I introduced my resolution, that I present it to the Committee today and that I seek the help of the Committee in its consideration, refinement, improvement and submission to the Senate.

Until now I have dealt in terms of history, constitutional law and Congressional tradition. Even in matters of high politics, however, the political quotient must be considered. In conclusion, therefore, it is not unbecoming to make a few remarks placing my resolution in its current political context.

I said at the outset that this resolution is a natural extension and complement of the National Commitments Resolution. But because they assert Congressional authority, no one should assume that these resolutions necessarily conflict with executive policy. In fact, President Eisenhower insisted on the primacy of Congress in these matters, while it was Congress—conditioned by the different attitudes of his predecessors—which was skeptical of its powers and refused to assert them fully.

Now President Nixon has an opportunity to reassert the position of President Eisenhower, demonstrate his own statesmanlike recognition of constitutional proprieties, and at the same time secure explicit Congressional support for the stated aims of Administration foreign policy. President Nixon himself in Guam and Manila affirmed that future American policy in Asia would be designed to "exclude the kind of support which would involve a commitment of manpower." President Nixon himself has eschewed pursuit of a military solution in Vietnam and has asserted a determination to remove all American troops.

My resolution, in fact, can be considered as a legislative combination of the Nixon plan for total withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam with the Nixon doctrine to limit American military commitments abroad. By supporting it, the President would reassure the country and the Congress of the depth of his commitment to these goals and dissipate some of the anxieties and misconceptions prevailing in the land.

So in making this proposal to the Congress—and in offering this testimony—I also issue an invitation to the President to participate with us in an historic undertaking. And in bringing these two branches of government together to reappraise American foreign policy for the seventies, I hope we can make a significant step toward bringing the American people together in the pursuit of peace.

#### THE STORY OF TRAN NGOC CHAU

Mr. FULBRIGHT. Mr. President, in this morning's Washington Post, Joseph Kraft tells us the story of Tran Ngoc Chau. It is a story that does not reflect credit on the United States or on the South Vietnamese regime of President Nguyen Van Thieu. I have known about the story for several months, and I know that the facts that Mr. Kraft recites are accurate. There are, of course, many other facts that have not been reported in the press.

To set the story in context, as Mr. Kraft writes, Chau is an old friend of President Thieu and once shared quarters with him when both were junior

officers. From 1960 to 1966 he was province chief in Kien Hoa and mayor of Danang. In both positions, he had an outstanding record. In 1966 he was nominated by CIA to be head of the cadre training program at the Vungtau Training Center where he obviously worked closely with the CIA as that agency had the responsibility for the center. In the 1967 National Assembly elections, he was elected a deputy from Kien Hoa with the second highest plurality in the country. He then became head of the opposition bloc and was elected Secretary General of the Assembly.

In 1965, Chau was contacted by his brother, Tran Ngoc Hien, a North Vietnamese intelligence agent. By Chau's own admission, he did not report these contacts to the South Vietnamese Government. Kraft says that whether he reported these contacts to the CIA is in dispute. Chau says that he did, as Keyes Beech reported in the Washington Evening Star on February 2. I know for a fact, from private sources, that he did report his contacts with his brother to a number of U.S. officials in Vietnam, including CIA officers with whom he had daily contact. I should add that I also know for a fact that he had, and still has, many close friends in the American official community.

At any rate, to return to the story told by Mr. Kraft, Chau began last year to advocate a cease-fire and direct negotiations between the South Vietnamese Government and the NLF. He also began to attack Nguyen Cao Thang, a rich Saigon pharmacist and member of President Thieu's inner clique, who is described by Kraft as President Thieu's "political bag man."

Chau's brother was arrested in April and interrogated in July. No charges were lodged against Chau at the time of his brother's arrest and interrogation. I am told, in fact, that relations between Chau and Thieu were not broken until some weeks or months thereafter. It appears that Thieu's open attacks on Chau began only after Chau denounced the pharmacist Thang.

Thus it appears that the real reason for Thieu's attack on Chau was not his contact with the Communists but rather Chau's growing power as an opposition figure and as a critic of Thieu's attempts to pressure and corrupt the Assembly as evidenced by the activities of Thang.

Thieu began his campaign against Chau by denouncing him publicly on a number of occasions. According to the Saigon press, in a speech on December 10 at the Vungtau Training Center, Thieu said that if the Assembly would not see justice done to Chau, and to two other accused deputies, "the people in the armed forces will cut off the heads of these deputies" and he added: "Our duty is to beat such dogs to death." Thieu organized demonstrations, including a march on Parliament, in connection with his efforts to lift Chau's parliamentary immunity. Failing to secure the votes of three-quarters of the members of the Assembly necessary to lift Chau's immunity, Thieu resorted to the legally questionable tactic of having a petition

lifting Chau's immunity circulated among Assembly members. According to a report in this morning's Washington Post by Robert Kaiser from Saigon, the 102 necessary signatures on the petition have now been obtained, and President Thieu is free to prosecute Chau.

I know that the U.S. mission in Saigon did not expect Thieu to obtain the necessary number of votes to lift Chau's immunity. But they obviously underestimated Thieu's determination and his ability to obtain the result he desires through threats and bribery. I have very persuasive evidence on this point. Mr. Kraft tells us that Ambassador Bunker was directed to intervene with President Thieu on Chau's behalf but that "the Embassy has not bestirred itself." Given the attitude of certain high mission officials toward Chau, and their unwillingness to incur President Thieu's displeasure, I am not surprised. Nor am I surprised that Chau is disenchanted with Americans because of their refusal to intervene, as Keyes Beech reported after his interview with Chau.

Chau is now in hiding. I hope for his sake that he will be able to escape Thieu's persecution. But even if he does, the story of Tran Ngoc Chau will not have a happy ending. The South Vietnamese Assembly has been intimidated, while the U.S. Government has shrugged its shoulders. And those in Vietnam who favor negotiation and compromise, or who dispute President Thieu, will speak at their peril from now on. Perhaps the story of Tran Ngoc Chau will prove to be the last chapter in the history of representative government in Vietnam.

#### EARTH DAY, APRIL 22

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, a few short months ago, I suggested in a speech at Seattle that American students take a major initiative by holding environmental teach-ins on every campus in the country on the same day this spring. Shortly afterward, Representative PAUL McCLOSKEY, Jr., a California Republican and an environmentalist, joined me in sponsoring what we saw as a nonpartisan, educational effort to draw the issues, stimulate plans for action, and demonstrate the strength of American concern for a livable world. A nine-member teach-in committee was formed, and the date of April 22 was suggested for the teach-ins.

From the very beginning, the response from around the country has been one of overwhelming support, not only from students, but from persons and organizations of all ages and political persuasions.

Since early December, a national environmental teach-in office has been established in Washington to provide coordination, communications, and service for the April 22 effort—and they report that already, at least 350 campuses are planning teach-ins, and from the continuing new contacts by mail and phone each day, it appears thousands of campuses, and high schools and communities as well, will be participating on April 22.

Though it is proving a focus for student concern on the environment at this point, the April 22 teach-in effort is only

one facet of this broad-ranging new insistence of the new generation on halting the environmental destruction and establishing quality on a par with quantity as an aim of American life.

Furthermore, this is only one more in a whole series of issues that have concerned youth in the past decade and I am sure, will continue to concern them in the future.

The CF letter, an excellent monthly report by the Conservation Foundation on environmental issues, has devoted its entire January issue to a report and analysis of the vast and growing student environmental concern. Thorough, well-written, informative reports such as these are a real public service in giving all Americans a much understanding of what young people are really trying to say and accomplish. I ask unanimous consent that the January CF letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the CF Letter, January 1970]

**STUDENTS RALLY TO HALT POLLUTION, RAISE QUALITY OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT**

They marched through the city handing out toy drums and balloons, carrying picket signs and wearing surgical masks. At the offices of the electric power company, they stopped and awarded the utility a blue ribbon citation for being a prime polluter of the air.

They formed a consulting service to do feasibility studies on alternatives to environmentally damaging projects.

They sat in the mud at a construction site for a new building to protest encroachment on open space.

They went out on an icy winter day and collected tons of refuse and junk from a nearby creek.

They held a mock funeral for the air-polluting internal combustion engine and celebrated a "Smog-Free Locomotion Day" by riding bikes, roller skates, stilts, wagons and pogo sticks.

They developed an award-winning urban design for a poverty area in a small southern city.

They staged an elaborate cross-country race between two electric cars, to call attention to the potential for reducing air pollution. They plan another race for all types of vehicles which caused less pollution.

They formed a corporation and filed a complaint to compel a bus company to stop polluting the air with diesel fumes.

They filed 58 complaints against a university for polluting a creek.

Who are they? They are the students and young people of the nation, rallying to the fight for a more liveable environment. They are dissatisfied, exasperated students, and they are throwing themselves into the fight with their customary fervor.

Said San Francisco State College student Pennfield Jensen recently: "The naive, enthusiasm and idealism of young people is not a thing to be scorned, for it is the raw material of constructive growth. We will stop the destruction of this planet even at the cost of our futures, careers and blood."

There is every indication that, far from being scorned, the students are helping to spread a contagious concern for the environment throughout society—somewhat as they did with civil rights and the Vietnam war. They are sending letters and petitions, demonstrating, printing pamphlets, conducting research, holding mass meetings, giving testimony, picketing, showing films, writing songs.

And they are just warming up. Much of the current focus is upon April 22—Earth Day—when a nationwide "environmental teach-in" is planned for hundreds of campuses—and communities. Students hope that the teach-in will help catalyze the public's growing concern for the environment; will be a clear manifestation of student involvement and determination; and will serve notice on the older generation that young people do not intend to put up with continued mistreatment of the environment.

**A GUT ISSUE**

It was natural that students should turn their attention to environmental degradation. They are aware of the world around them. And pollution is an all too obvious part of that world. Students also expect to be around long enough to reap the harvest of past mistakes.

Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, who with Congressman Paul McCloskey of California played a major role in launching the teach-in, recently put it this way: "The real loser in man's greedy drive is the youth of this country and the world. Because of the stupidity of their elders, the children of today face an ugly world in the near future, with dangerously and deadily polluted air and water; overcrowded development; festering mounds of debris; and an insufficient amount of open space to get away from it all. Since youth is again the great loser, perhaps the only hope for saving the environment and putting quality back into life may well depend on our being able to tap the energy, idealism and drive of the oncoming generation . . . One of the most dramatic developments of this decade has been the insistence of youth that in the last third of the 20th century, the quality of life must have a much higher priority than the greed of past generations has permitted."

Harvard University biology professor George Wald, speaking essentially about war and the population explosion, offers this explanation: "Unless we can be surer than we now are that this generation has a future, nothing else matters. It's not good enough to give it tender, loving care, to supply it with breakfast foods, to buy it expensive educations. Those things don't mean anything unless this generation has a future. And we're not sure that it does."

Some observers have viewed the new student preoccupation with environmental issues as a welcome change from anti-war dissent. But while many students clearly believe the ecological threat is more urgent and important than anything else, some are quick to disabuse anyone of the idea that they are turning their energies away from the war—or from other campus issues, including educational reform, race, and poverty.

Denis Hayes, a student who directs a national office providing clearinghouse services for teach-ins, sought to dispel several "widespread myths" that have sprung up about student concern with environmental issues. At a press conference in Washington, D.C., Hayes said one of these myths is the theory that involvement with the environment will be a "quieting force—stilling troubled campuses and healing the wounds of a divided nation."

"That is wishful thinking," he declared. "There are fundamental value conflicts between those who seek a better world, and those who care only for size, speed, and profit." In a challenge to President Nixon and Congress, Hayes added that "an even greater division will occur in this country if those now piously calling for environmental change later try to shortchange the necessary programs."

Hayes said another myth is that the environmental movement will "co-op people from other pressing social concerns to march on pollution. It won't. For ecology is concerned with the total system—not just the way it

disposes of its garbage. Our goal is not to clean the air while leaving slums and ghettos, nor is it to provide a healthy world for racial oppression and war. We wish to make the probability of life greater, and the quality of life higher. Those who share these goals cannot be 'co-opted'; they are our allies—not our competitors."

Hayes said another myth is that the environmental issue will "defuse" the anti-war movement. "It won't," he said. "Students and other Americans are fully able to be concerned about more than one issue at the same time."

One important characteristic of the student environmental movement is that it knows no ideological boundaries. It is attracting young people of all persuasions. It is bringing together, side by side, the bearded and bedraggled with the meticulously buttoned-down, the conservative young Republican and the militant SDS'er. There may be fragmentation and animosity later—but right now, everybody is breathing the same air, everybody is feeling the same malaise.

Concurrently, the fact that environmental problems involve so many fields of study and expertise—biology, chemistry, geology, planning, resource management, business, engineering, medicine, the law, art, architecture, etc.—brings a wide range of students together.

**"NEW ETHICAL ORIENTATION"**

What do the young people have to offer? What are they like and what is the nature of their involvement?

Generally, they are not hindered by affiliations, responsibilities and other adult hang-ups (such as, in some cases, making a living). Says Noam Chomsky, professor at M.I.T.: "The students have the freedom to think about what the world is like and the intelligence to draw the conclusions. Others don't have the freedom or are too bound by ideological constraints."

Thus, the young can challenge prevalent concepts, systems, values, and priorities. "What they want is, in some way, to begin all over again," says sociologist Margaret Mead. "They are ready to make way for something new by a kind of social bulldozing . . ."

As Hayes puts it: "The next stage in the environmental movement in this country must concern itself with widening the base of educated support . . . We hope to involve an entire society in a rethinking of many of its basic assumptions."

Says another young man: "Most of our environmental problems won't be solved until people's attitudes change—until their personal habits and patterns of life reflect an understanding of their relationships to each other and to the environment." Similarly, a California student said: "What we need is a whole new framework—a rethinking of the principles of private property, of whether land should, in fact, be owned at all, concepts that our society has been built on . . . nothing short of a complete re-examination of our basic values and beliefs will allow people to once again assert some control over their lives."

Just by framing such challenges, young people often penetrate to the nitty-gritty of an environmental problem. These basic challenges are related to the students' deep and abiding skepticism, their dislike of inconsistency and hypocrisy, their overriding humanitarianism, and their strong ethical stance.

Erik H. Erikson, a Harvard University professor writing in the winter 1970 issue of *Daedalus*, speaks of a "new generation of young adults who, with exhortation by song or slogan, by dramatic action or quiet resistance, have in recent years introduced a new ethical orientation into American life—an orientation already well visible in the concerns of a new generation of students."

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**Joseph Kraft**

## Thieu Line Blocks Speedy War Exit

**YOU DON'T NEED** a program, much less the elaborate reports on infiltration and pacification now being collected by the White House, to find out what's happening in Vietnam.

It is enough to follow the adventures of Tran Ngoc Chau, a South Vietnamese deputy who has been the subject of savage persecution by the Saigon government, and of confused intrigue involving, among many others, the White House, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the American embassy.

Chau is a 46-year-old soldier and politico with great energy, acute intelligence and the kind of past that can only be accumulated in Vietnam. He was born in Hue, followed his older brother into the ranks of the Communist Vietminh in their fight against the French, and then, in 1950, went over to the nationalist side.

Under the regime of President Ngo Dinh Diem, Chau rose rapidly as a sturdy anti-Communist, adept at the techniques of political action. At the military school in Dalat he became friendly with the commandant, General Nguyen Van Thieu, whose wife he once rescued in a fire. From 1960 to 1963, he served as province chief in Kienhoa, a Communist stronghold in the Mekong Delta where he initiated with the financial support from the Central Intelligence Agency some of the pioneer population control techniques. When the Buddhists began their anti-Diem campaign in the spring of 1964, Chau was sent to restore order as Mayor of Danang, the main trouble spot.

Because of his identification with the old regime, Chau was in trouble immediately after the coup that toppled Diem. He returned to Kienhoa as province chief, and with CIA help again, he began the pilot program that resulted in the training of revolutionary development cadres for administering villages and hamlets.

In 1966 the Saigon government accepted a CIA recommendation and made Chau head of the whole cadre program. In the elections of 1967, Chau was chosen deputy from Kienhoa with something like 45 per cent of the vote—the second-highest plurality in the country. Once in the Assembly, he became head of an opposition bloc and was elected secretary general of the lower house. Not a few American officials began to think of him as a prospective prime minister or president.

**THEY HELD** this view though they knew Chau had been contacted back in 1965 by a top Vietcong agent—his

brother Tran Ngoc Hien who had stayed with the Communists. Indeed, some American officials regarded the contact as an asset and arranged for Chau to report to them regularly. The CIA knew of the contact. But Chau refused to serve as an agent and resisted overtures to have his brother defect. And whether he reported his contacts to the agency is in dispute.

When the Paris negotiations stalled last year, Chau emerged as a prominent advocate of compromise. He called for "a total ceasefire" and "direct negotiations" between the Communists and the Saigon regime. He began going after the power base of his old buddy, President Thieu. He attacked Nguyen Cao Thang, a rich Saigon pharmacist widely believed to serve Thieu as a political bag man. And he stressed the role of the political parties and religious sects as against the army.

Three months later, Chau's Communist brother was arrested, and President Thieu had the weapon he needed. The President used the story of the contacts to set in motion a furious campaign against Chau. He personally denounced Chau as a Communist and traitor. His men applied threats and cajolery to lift Chau's parliamentary immunity. Screaming rioters, demanding vengeance on Chau, were organized to march on the parliament building.

**IN PHYSICAL** danger from his own people, Chau turned to the Americans. At one point he hid out with a helicopter and auto loaned by an American official. At another he vainly sought asylum in this country. At still another, the White House directed the State Department to ask Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to intervene with President Thieu on Chau's behalf. But the embassy has not bestirred itself. And it is touch and go as to whether Chau will survive the terror campaign.

And what does it all mean? Well, President Thieu is plainly seizing the moment to establish dictatorial authority by squashing all opposition. In the process General Thieu cuts down the truest patriots—the men who can best serve Vietnamese independence in the long run. While these actions run counter to Washington's express policy, Washington's views are discounted by American officials in Saigon who operate on the premise of see it through with Nguyen Van Thieu. And their indiscriminate support of the Thieu regime closes off the one quick exit from Vietnam—the exit that lies through a negotiated settlement with the other side.

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# Accused Viet Assemblyman Denies Ties to Reds or CIA

SAIGON (UPI)—Tran Ngoc Chau, a South Vietnamese National Assemblyman awaiting trial on charges of being pro-Communist, has portrayed himself as a dedicated nationalist interested only in the future of his country.

In an interview yesterday, Chau said he was not a Communist, had no Communist leanings nor was he a U.S. Central Intelligence agent.

He said he simply wanted "peace, freedom and the just cause of South Vietnam."

Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has described Chau as having "daily contact" with the CIA. Fulbright has raised Chau's case as part of the committee's hearings of Vietnam politics.

Fulbright says Chau was deserted by the U.S. government after he opposed President Nguyen Van Thieu.)

## 102 Sign Petition

Chau, 46, is scheduled to be tried before a military court next month on charges of conducting pro-Communist activi-



TRAN NGOC CHAU

ties. President Thieu ordered the trial after 102 of 135 of Chau's fellow deputies signed a petition calling for a trial to clear or convict him.

Another deputy, Hoang Ho, is scheduled to be tried with Chau. A third deputy, Pham The Truc, accused of activities harmful to the Republic of Vietnam, has

been in self-exile in France since last spring.

Speaking at the home at a friend where he said he has been writing a book about his case, Chau, former mayor Nang and a province chief, said he felt he would receive "at least a life sentence, if not death" at the trial "because of the concerted action of President Thieu, the CIA and U.S. Ambassador (Ellsworth) Bunker."

## "Deceived by Bunker"

He added that Thieu, a former ally, "and many anti-Communist personalities in South Vietnam are being deceived by Ambassador Bunker into a most dark scheme whereby the new American Vietnam policy can be realized."

That policy, in Chau's view, is to establish and consolidate a government representing a minority in South Vietnam.

The endurance and strength of that government must be dependent on armed forces and the cadre trained at the Revolutionary Development Training Center at Vung Tau which was established and financed by the CIA, he said.

(An earlier report by the Chicago Daily News Service said that after first adopting a "hands off" attitude toward the case, Bunker reportedly asked Thieu to soften his campaign against Chau because it was hurting the South Vietnamese president's political image in the United States.)



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# Accused Saigon Deputy Blames U.S.

By Robert G. Kaiser

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, Feb. 17—Tran Ngoc Chau, the outspoken House deputy, today blamed American pressure for President Thieu's decision to prosecute him for "activities helpful to the Communists."

Chau claimed the United States feared that Thieu would use him to initiate direct talks with the Communists and bypass the Americans. Now, he charged, Thieu is prosecuting him in order to impress the Americans that this was never Thieu's intention.

Chau has long been a favorite of U.S. officials in Vietnam, and has many American friends. In an interview in his Saigon "hide-out" today, however, Chau spoke bitterly of the U.S. government, which he said was trying to "clean their hands" of him.

Chau, whose American



TRAN NGOC CHAU

... suspects U.S. policy

friends have been unable to protect him from the wrath of Thieu, said that he has "lost all faith" in U.S. policy. He warned other Vietnamese who have cooperated

with the Americans to prepare for betrayal like the one he claims to have suffered.

The Chau case is the main attraction in Saigon's center ring these days. It combines—in one unruly package—three of the issues that concern this capital most: the American role in Vietnam, Thieu's feuds with his opponents and the status of Vietnamese democracy. This case may have important and lasting effects on the last two issues.

And the Chau case is resplendant with the little touches of Vietnam that boggle the Western mind. For example, the political gossips have been saying that Chau is sleeping in a different house every night, stealthily dodging Thieu's police. In fact, as this reporter discovered when he visited Chau this morning, he is living quite openly in a

house that is elaborately staked out by some quite un-subtle plainclothesmen.

Very briefly, this is the story of Tran Ngoc Chau:

Now 46, he fought for the Vietminh until 1949, when he left the revolutionary movement to join the forces of the Emperor Bao Dai. He became an officer, rose quickly through the ranks and was soon immersed in a distinguished career.

He went to infantry school at Ft. Benning, Ga., in 1955-56, where he learned English, and also American ways. Thereafter Chau seemed always to get along well with Americans in Vietnam. His success as chief of Kienhoa Province in the early 1960s brought him to the attention of high American officials, who saw to it that he was promoted to important administrative jobs.

See CHAU, A14, Col. 1



## CHAU, From A1

In 1967 he ran for the National Assembly from Kienhoa, and won an impressive victory. He was elected an officer of the House of Representatives, and began to establish a name for himself.

### Meets With Brother

From 1965 onward, Chau was also leading a secret life—a life he shared only with a few Americans. In 1965 his brother and former Vietnamese comrade, Tran Ngoc Hien, came secretly to Chau and announced he was a high-ranking North Vietnamese agent.

From then until early 1968, Chau and Hien met quite regularly. According to the testimony of both, each tried to convert the other. At the same time, they discussed possible approaches to a settlement of the war. According to Chau, he was trying to arrange talks among the warring Vietnamese factions, excluding the Americans, that might lead to a political settlement. He admits he pursued this idea without informing the Vietnamese government.

Hien was arrested last April. He confessed his intelligence activities in the South, and gave a detailed account of his talks with Chau. (The Washington Post published excerpts from Hien's confession on Jan. 5.)

Chau, meanwhile, began to speak critically of the Thieu government's policies. He called publicly for direct negotiations with the Vietcong before Thieu had accepted that idea. He also proposed a form of coalition government that would have given the Communists a share of power in the provinces and the National Assembly, but not in the executive branch.

Last July, Thieu told a group of legislators that Chau had had illegal contacts with the enemy. That began a complicated series of events—dominated by an emotional anti-Chau cam-

paign conducted by Thieu himself—that has now ended with Chau formally accused of "activities helpful to the Communists."

He was protected by the Vietnamese equivalent of congressional immunity, but the government overcame this obstacle by promoting a petition in the House to withdraw the immunity in this case. The petition was allegedly signed by 102 members—exactly the three-fourths required by law—and a trial is expected soon.

### Calls Charges Ridiculous

Today the accused man contended that the charges against him were ridiculous. Chau admitted that he talked to his brother, showed him some courtesies and failed to betray him to the government. But he denied giving him any significant help, and insisted that his contacts with Hien were intended only to try to convert his brother, and to bring an end to the war.

Chau admits that he did not inform any Vietnamese officials that he was talking secretly with his brother, a Communist spy. He defended this today on the ground that when his talks with Hien began, the South Vietnamese government was chaotic, run by generals whose "war sentiment was very strong." In recent times, Chau said, he thought he had the right to conduct independent talks as a member of the National Assembly.

But, he added, he did think he should tell some Americans about his brother. Chau gave these details of his dealings with U.S. officials:

"Among those I informed after this first contact with Hien [in late 1965] were John Vann [an adviser in Vietnam since the early 1960s, now in charge of pacification in the Mekong Delta], Stuart Methven [described by Chau as a CIA employe], Thomas Donohue [another CIA man, Chau

said], and . . . the CIA station chief at the time."

### U.S. Officials Informed

According to all the rules of diplomatic or military practice, contacts of this sort would have to be reported by such men to higher authority. If men as prominent as John Vann and a CIA station chief were involved, it seems certain all top U.S. officials in Vietnam must have been informed. Chau said as much in today's interview:

"Methven and Donohue told me they would inform the appropriate Vietnamese officials; Vann went to see the U.S. ambassador—I don't know which, [Eugene] Locke or [Henry Cabot] Lodge—and the ambassador said it was okay for me to continue my contacts" with Hien. Locke was then deputy U.S. ambassador.

Chau said two U.S. officials—Col. Mike Dunn, now a White House military aide who worked for Lodge, and a Mr. Adam, described by Chau as a CIA man—came to see him to find out what he was hearing from his brother.

During mid-1967, Chau related, his conversations with Hien and other factors persuaded him that the Vietcong would try to create uprisings in populated areas. In August 1967, he said, he gave a three-hour briefing on his theory to Ambassadors Ellsworth Bunker and Locke and several military officials, including Lt. Gen. Frederick Weyand.

Five months later the Communists launched the Tet offensive.

Throughout 1968, Chau said, he continued to keep Americans—especially Vann—informed of his talks with Hien. The Americans "seemed pleased just to get more of the Communist assessment," Chau said today.

### Vann Intervenes

After Hien was arrested last April, Chau said, he went to see Vann at his headquarters in Cantho, the

largest city in the Delta. According to Chau, "At the time, Ambassador [William] Colby [currently head of the U.S. pacification program] was in Sadec Province. Vann called him and got approval on the phone to see [Minister of the Interior Tran Thien] Khiem. The next day Vann saw Khiem." Vann's intervention on Chau's behalf, he added, "seemed to delay the whole affair for some time."

According to Chau, this was the last overt cooperation he got from his American friends. Ambassador Bunker refused to meet him, Chau claimed. Then, he added, the ambassador ordered all American officials to cease dealing with Chau.

"Bunker and the CIA believed Thieu would use me and my brother to make a secret arrangement for direct talks between the Vietnamese, without letting the Americans know about it," Chau claimed.

He noted that he and Thieu had been friends since the time both were young lieutenants. But now, Chau said, Thieu responds primarily to Bunker. Chau said he believes he is being prosecuted to demonstrate to Bunker that Thieu has no plans for a secret deal.

### New American Policy

Chau charged that there is a new American policy in Vietnam, intended to impose a minority government on the country that will be utterly dependent on U.S. aid, and therefore unable to negotiate its own end to the war.

The U.S. mission here is familiar with most of Chau's claims that he was betrayed by the American government and abandoned in time of need. But the embassy has made no comment on Chau's accusations, the first of which were published ten days ago. This unusual silence suggests orders from Washington not to talk.

Well before Chau's accusations began, however, many embassy officials pri-

vately expressed displeasure with Thieu's attempt to prosecute Chau and two other members of the House. The degree of displeasure these Americans have expressed has been unprecedented in the friendly American relationship with Thieu.

It was learned today that Bunker has told Thieu that the U.S. expects a variety of unfavorable consequences if Chau is sentenced to prison. Some of Bunker's staff believe much damage has already been done by Thieu's public campaign against the House.

If the Chau case opened a door on interesting aspects of the U.S. role in Vietnam, it has also provided an intriguing glimpse of Vietnamese democracy under pressure.

The legal issues in the case are complicated, though the basic facts of the alleged crime are simple and apparently agreed by all parties. It is against the law to give any help to Communists, and by Chau's own admission he gave his brother some assistance—though he claims it was insignificant. For this reason, hawks among Saigon's politicians are prepared to condemn Chau.

#### Symbolic Case

But there is some question as to whether this technical violation of the law is the real issue. An authoritative source in the presidential palace, for instance, said today that although Chau's transgressions were not serious, the case against him would be pressed because "it symbolizes the anti-Communist spirit of the government."

Phan Thong, a House member who chaired a committee that investigated the charges against Chau and found them justified, said in an interview today that he too saw more than legal issues behind the prosecution. Thong said the chief of the Special (Intelligence) Police told his investigating

committee that Chau was "too ambitious in politics." Thong suggested that Chau would have been left alone if he had not made his proposal for a coalition government.

Another complication involves the petition that the government says stripped Chau of his immunity. Many lawyers and legislators have challenged the theory that the House can substitute a petition for actual floor action. It is widely assumed that the government could not win a three-fourths vote on the floor, if only because attendance at the House is so poor.

Some politicians think Thieu's petition ploy will do permanent damage to the procedures of the Assembly.

Deputy Thong said he thought the petition might not have been completely fair. But then, he added, Chau had ignored one article of the constitution by helping a Communist, so how could he expect protection from other articles of the constitution that stipulate proper parliamentary procedures?

It is hard to find a Vietnamese who really expects the government to follow strictly any prearranged set of laws and regulations. That is a Western notion.

#### Talk of Politics

So the talk among politicians about the Chau case tends to center more on politics

and personalities than legalities. Some, including Chau himself, think Thieu is trying to intimidate all his opposition by his crackdown on Chau and the other two House deputies.

Those who subscribe to this theory deplore the president's high-handedness and warn of more repression of the opposition, but the theory is hardly universal. Many of the most outspoken opponents of Thieu don't accept it.

Another school theorizes that Thieu is damaging himself more than Chau or any other opponent by making such a big issue out of a small incident.

"It is like with Sen. Tran Van Don," said an articulate

member of the House, referring to another Thieu critic who has lately incurred presidential ire. "Thieu is building up Chau and other opponents by attacking them fiercely."

Chau himself is the issue with some politicians. His critics call him vain, a self-promoter with an exaggerated sense of his own importance. Other say he just isn't worth all the fuss.

Chau's connection with the CIA has become an issue—several papers have attacked him as an American lackey. "Many Vietnamese think if Chau is so close to the CIA, he deserves some punishment," a thoughtful editor said tonight.